

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A system for enabling enforcement of written software
5 licensing terms for a software product for use with a computer having a set
of hardware components, the system comprising:

a software product resident on the computer, the software product
having an associated product ID and generating a hardware ID that
identifies the set of hardware components, the software product sending the
10 product ID and hardware ID to an activation authority remote from the
computer, wherein the hardware ID is a 64-bit hardware ID that identifies a
set of ten hardware components within the computer;

an activation unit at the activation authority, the activation unit
computing a license file from the product ID and hardware ID, the
15 activation unit returning the license file to the software product; and

the software product storing the license file locally on the
computer.

2. The system recited in claim 1, wherein the activation unit
20 hashes a concatenation of the product ID and the hardware ID to derive the
license file.

3. The system recited in claim 1, wherein the activation unit
stores the product ID, hardware ID and license file.

25

4. The system recited in claim 1, wherein the software product is subsequently launched following installation, the software product retrieves the 64-bit hardware ID and compares the hardware ID to the set of hardware components on the computer, wherein if a suitable match occurs, the software product is enabled to operate on the computer; otherwise, if a suitable match does not occur, the software product is locked and prevented from operating on the computer.

10 5. The system recited in claim 4 wherein a suitable match comprises at least seven out of the ten hardware components identified by the hardware ID are found in the set of hardware components on the computer.

15 6. The system recited in claim 5 wherein the 64-bit hardware ID is retrieved from the license file.

 7. The system of claim 6 wherein the hardware ID is retrieved from the license file by hashing the license file.

20

8. A hardware ID for identifying a plurality of components of a computer system, wherein the hardware ID is stored on the computer system and is generated during the installation of a software product on the computer system, wherein the hardware ID comprises:

a CD-ROM device portion identifying a CD-ROM device of the computer system;

a disk adapter portion identifying a disk adapter of the computer system;

a disk device portion identifying a disk device of the computer system;

a display adapter portion identifying a display adapter of the computer system;

a first drive serial portion identifying a disk drive of the computer system;

a MAC address portion identifying a MAC address of the computer system;

a processor serial number portion identifying a processor serial number of the computer system;

a processor type portion identifying a processor type of the computer system;

a RAM size portion identifying a RAM size of the computer system;
and

a SCSI adapter portion identifying a SCSI adapter of the computer system.

9. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the hardware ID is 64 bits.

5

10. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the CD-ROM device portion comprises a hashing of a CD-ROM device identification string.

10

11. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the disk adapter portion comprises a hashing of disk adapter peripheral component interface (PCI) vendor and device identifications.

15

12. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the disk device portion comprises a hashing of a disk device identification string.

13. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the display adapter portion comprises a hashing of video adapter PCI vendor and device identifications.

20

14. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the first drive serial portion comprises a hashing of an operating system assigned serial number of a first partition.

15. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the MAC address portion comprises a hardware address of a network interface connecting the computer system to a shared network.

5 16. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the processor serial number portion comprises an identification of the manufacturer's serial number for the processor of the computer system.

10 17. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the RAM size portion comprises the size of the RAM in the computer system in megabytes.

15 18. The hardware ID of claim 8 wherein the SCSI adapter portion comprises an identification of the Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI) adapter of the computer system.

19. A method for enabling enforcement of software licensing terms for a software product for use with a computer comprising a set of hardware components, the method comprising the steps of:

retrieving a hardware identification, wherein the hardware
5 identification comprises identifiers for a plurality of hardware components of a licensed computer;

comparing the plurality of hardware components identified by the hardware identification to a plurality of hardware components of the computer;

10 determining a number of matches between the plurality of hardware components identified by the hardware identification and the plurality of hardware components of the computer;

determining whether the number of matches exceeds a predetermined minimum number of matches; and

15 if so, then determining that the computer is the same computer as the licensed computer.

20. The method of claim 19 further comprising the steps of:

if it is determined that the computer is the same computer as the
20 licensed computer, then allowing the software product to fully operate on the computer.

21. The method of claim 20 further comprising the steps of:
if it is determined the number of matches does not exceed a
predetermined minimum number of matches, then causing the software
5 product to operate on the computer in a reduced functionality mode.